

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
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## **Attorney General Racine Joins Multistate Effort Urging Congress to Address Gun Violence**

**WASHINGTON, D. C.** – Attorney General Karl A. Racine has joined a multistate coalition urging Congress to immediately fund research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) into the causes and prevention of gun-related injuries and death.

In 1996, Congress began including a provision in the CDC's annual appropriations bill that prohibits the agency from using funds "to advocate or promote gun control." Attorney General Racine and 12 other state attorneys general sent a letter today calling for Congress not only to eliminate the language blocking research efforts, but also to direct funding for the CDC to study the causes of gun violence. The goal is to help determine the most effective prevention strategies.

**"Our solutions to prevent gun violence should be informed by sound scientific study of root causes and risk factors,"** said Attorney General Racine. **"This research is crucial to better understanding how we can address this problem nationally and here in the District, where gun violence takes a tragic toll every year."**

Gun violence is an immediate concern to residents of the District. Last year, the District experienced a 54 percent increase in the number of homicides over 2014, the overwhelming number of which involved firearms. Analyses of prevention measures, such as counseling by healthcare providers, and scientific research into the root cause and psychology of gun violence are needed to help reduce the number of gun violence victims.

Unfortunately, while more than half a million Americans have died by firearms over the past 20 years, federal funding for research into gun violence has been cut by 96 percent. In their letter, the attorneys general say that sidelining the CDC severely limits data collection and discourages public health professionals from working in this field.

According to the letter (a copy of which is attached), more than 33,000 people die every year in the United States from gun violence. Unintentional shootings account for 600 more deaths annually. Gun violence also disproportionately affects communities of color, as African Americans are nearly twice as likely to be injured or killed by guns as white Americans.

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